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# LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE REVISION

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AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION  
February 5, 2020

# AGENDA

## **AFTERNOON**

- Preservation Incentive
- Calculating FAR
- House-Scale Residential Testing & FAR Calibration
  - Data Analysis
  - Modeling
- Multi-Unit and Mixed-Use
  - Modeling
  - Compatibility

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# PRESERVATION INCENTIVE

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# COUNCIL DIRECTION: PRESERVATION INCENTIVE

## ***Council Direction – Casar RES4***

“Amend the preservation bonus as follows (without specific numbers or methods being prescribed):

- (1) Allow the preserved unit(s) to be expanded and remodeled up to the allowable FAR for the unit(s).
- (2) Limit the size of a single preservation unit ADU to be larger than the current allowable size (e.g., 1,600 sq ft) and two-unit preservation bonus to 0.5 FAR (or whichever graduated FARs are adopted).
- (3) Allow lots utilizing the preservation bonus to utilize a simple subdivision process and allow them to waive minimum lot sizes upon subdivision.
- (4) Clarify that preserving only the existing ADU does not qualify as preservation.
- (5) Reduce the required age of a qualifying home to be preserved from 30 to 15 years.
- (6) Increase impervious cover from 45% to 50% if possible if preservation bonus is used. Reduce impervious cover in R2 zones for developments of only one unit (as recommended by the Planning Commission) or an amount that negates the increase in impervious cover and reduce a small percentage the impervious cover for R2 zones generally to negate any increase in impervious cover.
- (7) Waive parking requirements for preservation bonus units.
- (8) To utilize the preservation bonus, there must be an increase in units.”



# HOUSE-SCALE PRESERVATION INCENTIVE

## **Bonus**

- Preserved structure does not count against the maximum FAR
- One additional unit may be built beyond what is otherwise allowed in the zone, and may be any use permitted in the zone

## **Eligibility Requirements**

- Must be at least 30 years old
- Must be the principal use on a site
- Must increase the number of units by one

## **Preservation Requirements**

- Limits on wall removal, alterations to exterior walls, modifications to the roofline, and expansion of the original structure
- Impervious cover follows the same overall approach to graduated impervious cover of base zones
- Parking requirement waived for new units

# MULTI-UNIT PRESERVATION INCENTIVE

## **Bonus**

- Preserved structure does not count against the maximum FAR
- 50% additional units may be built beyond what is otherwise allowed in the zone, and may be any use permitted in the zone

## **Eligibility Requirements**

- Must be at least 30 years old
- Must be the principal use on a site
- Must increase the number of units by 10%

## **Preservation Requirements**

- 75% of the existing residential units are required to be preserved
- Limits on wall removal, alterations to exterior walls, modifications to the roofline, and expansions to the original structure
- Standard parking exemptions

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# CALCULATING FAR

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# COUNCIL DIRECTION: FLOOR AREA RATIO

## ***COUNCIL DIRECTION STAFF2 MM-5 Floor Area Calculations***

“Revise calculation of gross floor area to better account for usable space, such as garages and attics, which contribute to size and mass. Use current McMansion ordinance as a point of reference, but ensure that proposed rules are simple and open to less interpretation.”

## ***COUNCIL DIRECTION PC R21 Double height space relation to FAR***

“In calculating FAR (Floor Area Ratio), all conditioned space 15' tall and taller count twice toward FAR.”

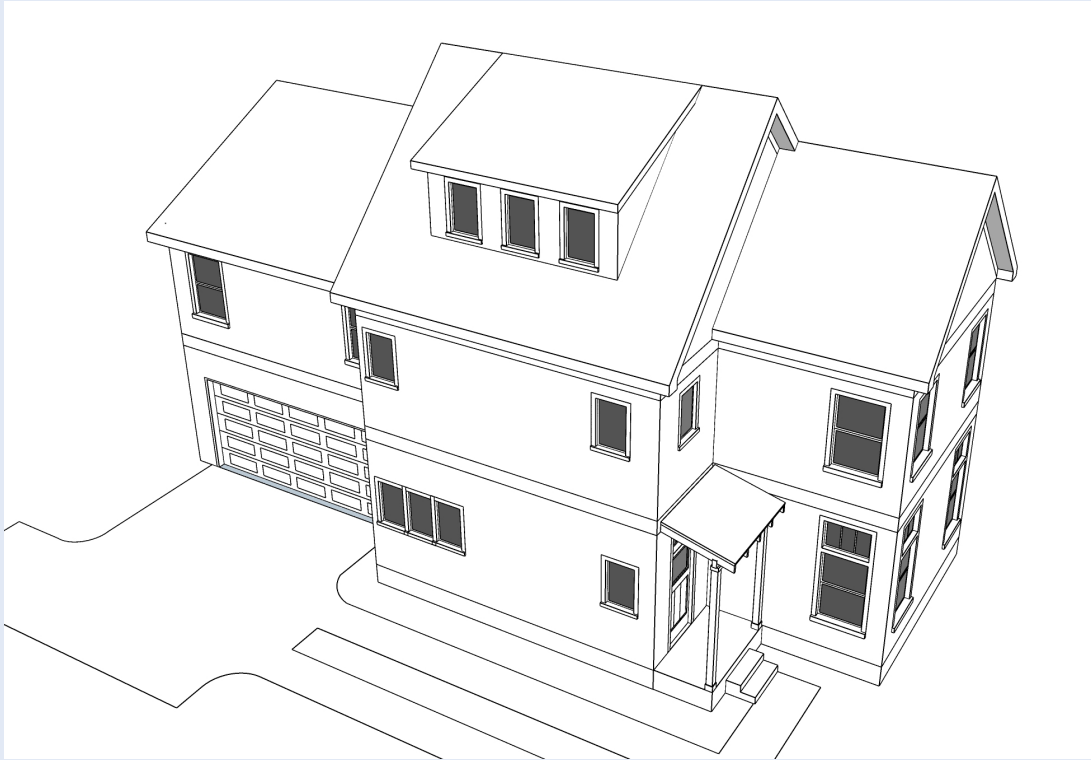
## ***COUNCIL DIRECTION CASAR RES3 AMEND PC R22 FAR Exemptions***

“In calculating FAR (Floor Area Ratio), allow a partial attic and partial garage / carport exemption.”

## ***COUNCIL DIRECTION ALTER #4 FAR Calibration***

“Staff should come back with code language and modeling demonstrating the impacts on housing and affordability capacity to eliminate attic, garage, and balcony exemptions from FAR calculations in residential-house scale and transition zones. Staff should prepare information to demonstrate what if any impact eliminating those exemptions would have on housing unit capacity. The new code should include an updated and clear definition of “Residential Unit” so that only spaces truly meant for separate habitation are allowed to access increased FAR and impervious cover entitlements, (including artist studio and other work/live spaces within the additional unit).”

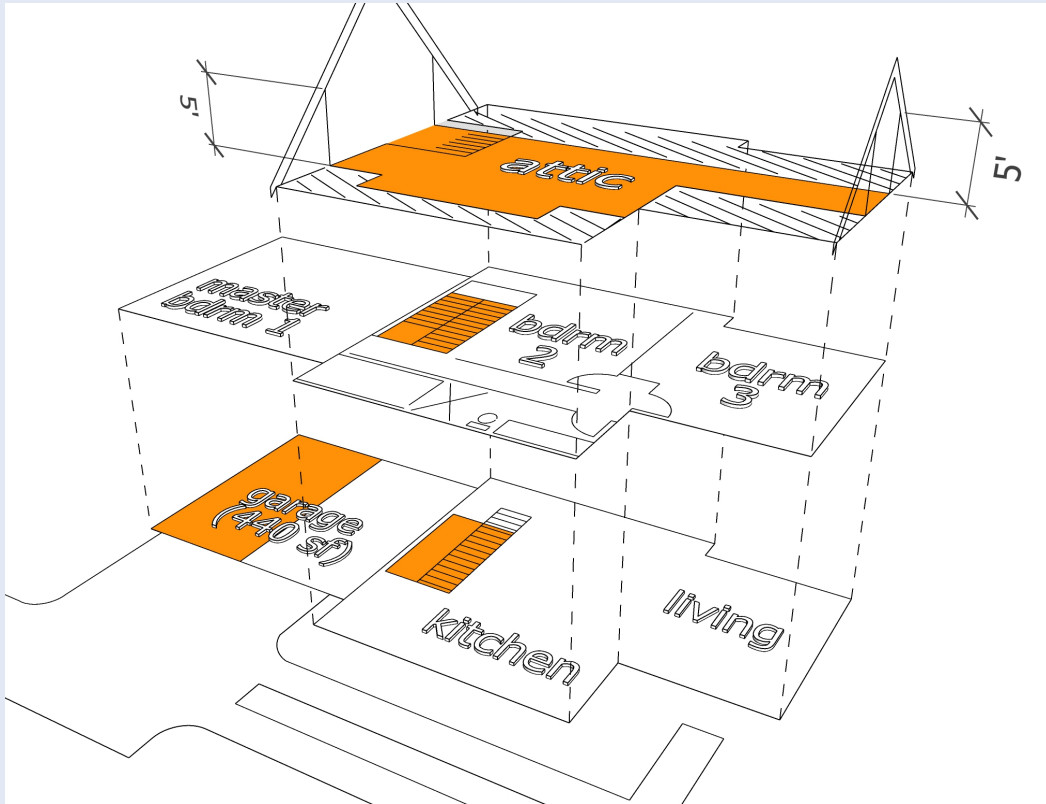
# FAR CALCULATION



Current Code under  
Subchapter F (McMansion)  
exemptions:

- Up to 650 sf for garage/carport if meets certain criteria
- Attic fully exempt if meets certain criteria

# FAR CALCULATION



2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Draft  
exemptions:

- Up to 200 sf per unit for garage/carport
- Up to 400 sf per unit for attic (all space over 5' counts toward FAR)
- 60' per stair

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# HOUSE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL TESTING & FAR CALIBRATION

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## COUNCIL DIRECTION: FLOOR AREA RATIO

### ***COUNCIL DIRECTION STAFF2 MM-4 Reductions in Maximum FAR***

“Revise R2 regulations to reduce maximum FAR for two-unit projects on larger lots, with current code as a point of reference, while ensuring that FAR limits are sufficient to allow construction of ADUs on lots less than 7,000 square feet.”

“Revise RM1 regulations to reduce maximum FAR from 0.8 to 0.6 for residential development of three units or less. Consider additional FAR reductions as needed to incentivize housing capacity and discourage larger size units in missing middle zones.”

### ***COUNCIL DIRECTION PC R5 R4 FAR adjustment***

“Revise R4 FAR to be graduated by unit count, increasing to incentivize more missing-middle units and re-evaluate bonus FAR in consideration of bonus viability.”

### ***COUNCIL DIRECTION CASAR RES2 Site Development Standards***

“To incentivize smaller housing types, R-zones should allow for increased allowable size of structures only as the number of units increases. This would mean a fourplex would be allowed to be a bigger size than a triplex, a triplex would be allowed to be a bigger size than a duplex, and a duplex would be allowed to be a bigger size than a single family house. Also, staff should continue to explore having a different graduated FAR for large lots compared to small lots to keep with the goal of incentivizing moderate size, family friendly housing. Here is an illustration of FAR requirements that would incentivize family friendly, but modest size, homes without prescription:

- (1) 0.35 FAR for one unit
- (2) 0.5 FAR or for two units
- (3) 0.65 FAR for three units
- (4) 0.8 FAR for four units”



# Testing Process

- Modeling on the minimum parcel size and median parcel size
- Modeling base and the bonus
- Assume 1 to 1 parking except in bonus and preservation scenarios
- Indicate when FAR, IC or both are governing factors that limit unit count

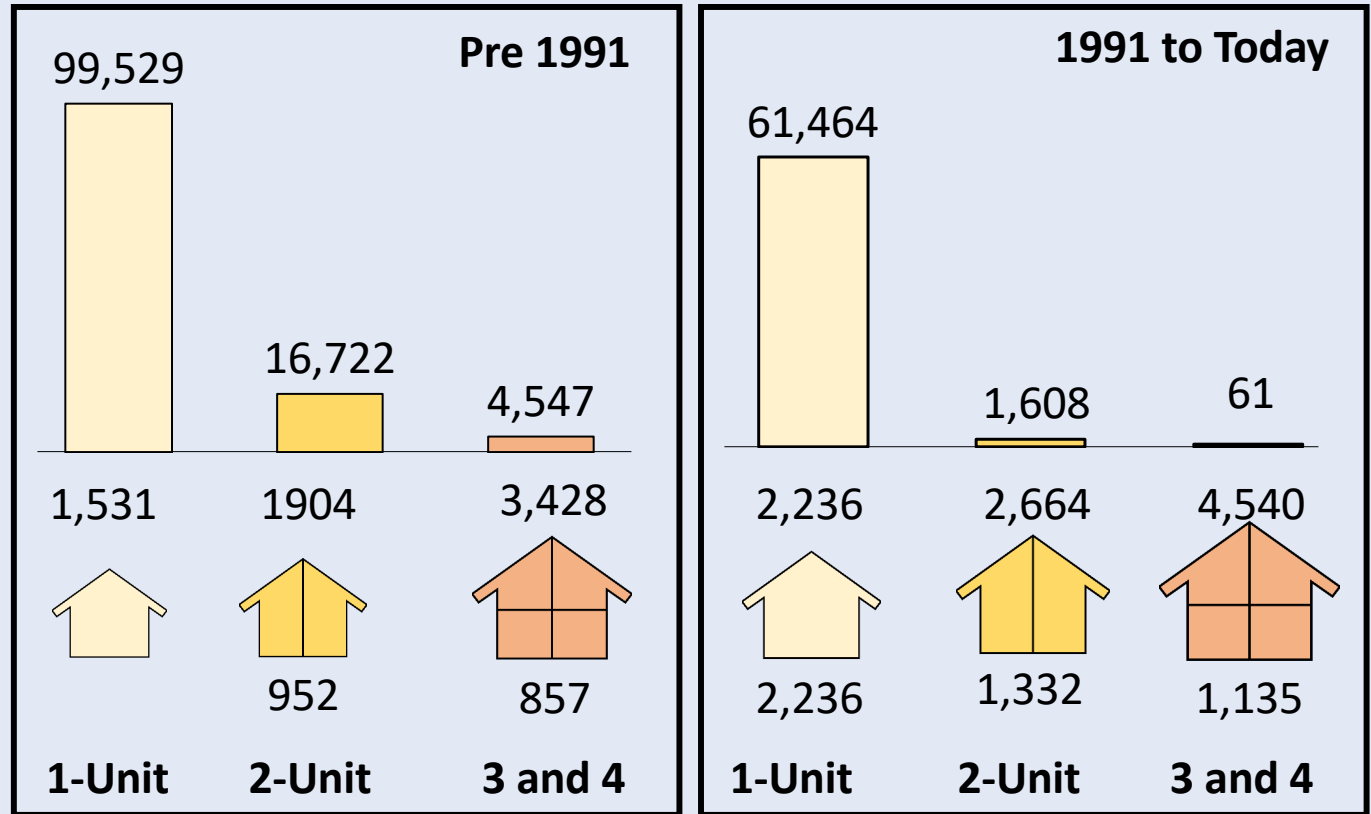
# TCAD DATA

**Unit Count**

**Median Building Size**

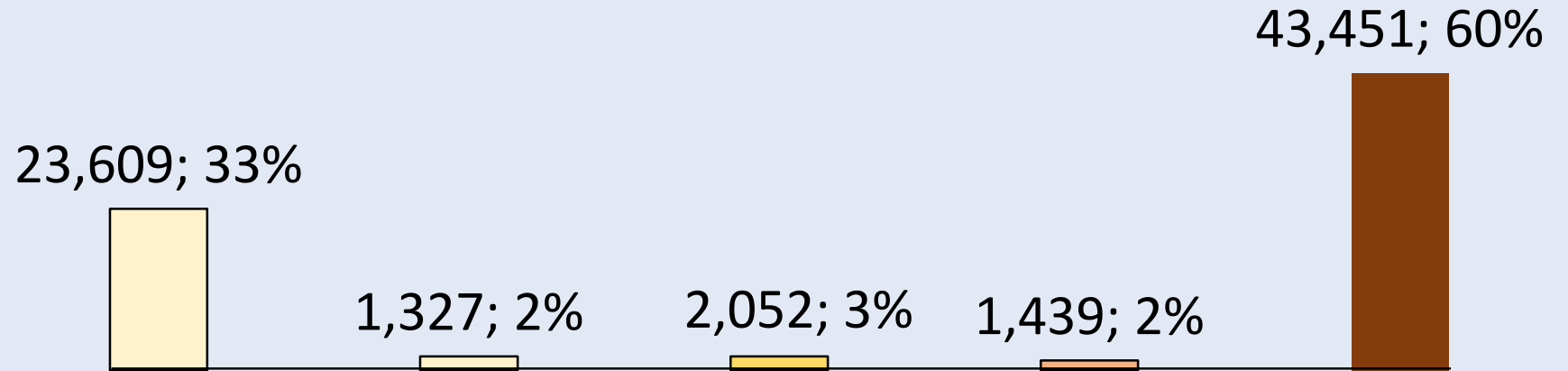
**Average Unit Size**

Source: TCAD



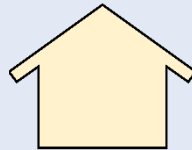
# RESIDENTIAL PERMIT DATA – LAST 10 YEARS

## Unit Count

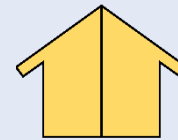


## Median Building Size (sf)

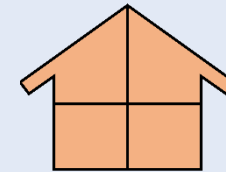
2,574



3,948



3,832



## Average Unit Size (sf)

1,974

1,916

**1-Unit**

**ADU**

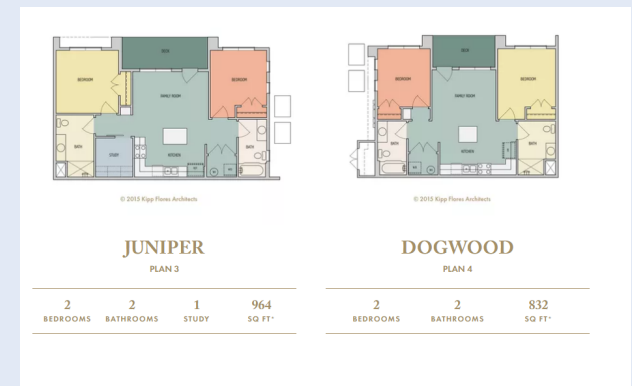
**2-Unit**

**3-10**

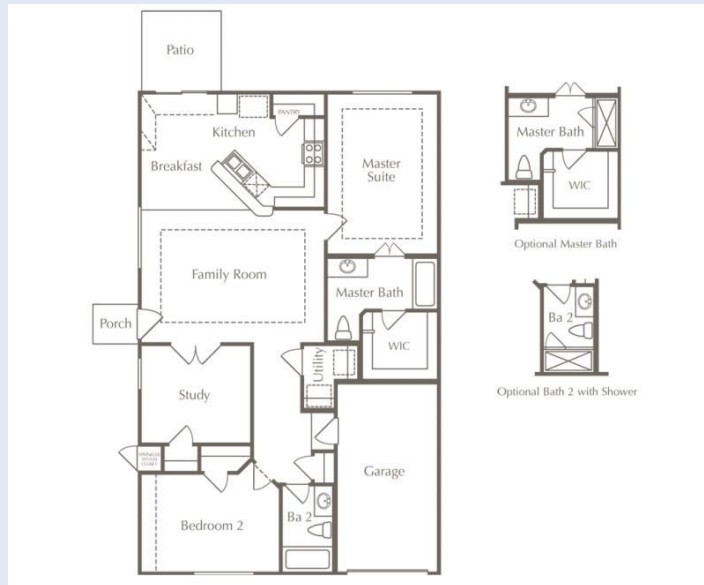
**11+**

Source: City of Austin All Finaled Building Permits since January 1, 2010...through December 26, 2019

# REGIONAL COMPS



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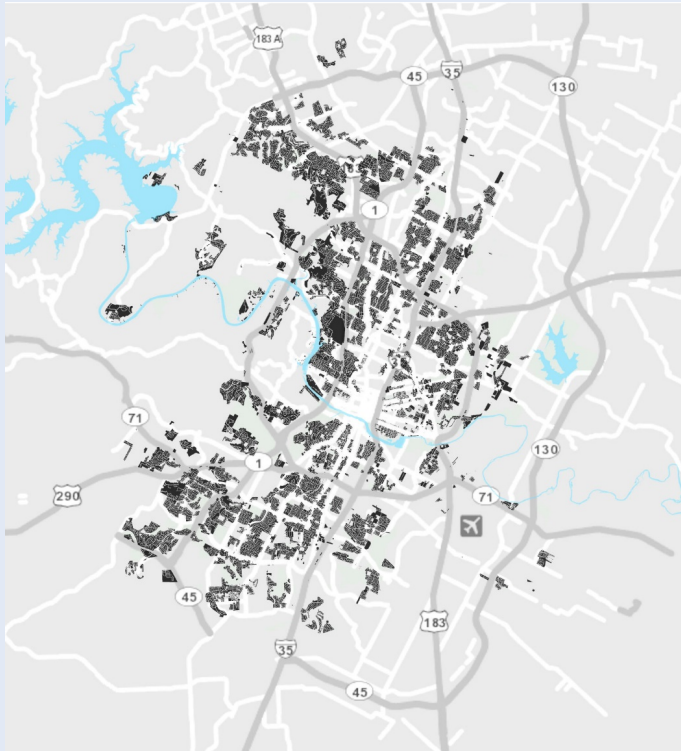


1329 SF  
3 Bedroom, 2 Bath



1294 SF  
3 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath

# R2A/R2B



**21.30% of City**

Median parcel size: **8528 sf**

## BASE SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

No. of Units	Impervious Cover	FAR
1 unit	40%	0.4
2 units	45%	0.4 FAR or 1300 sf per unit

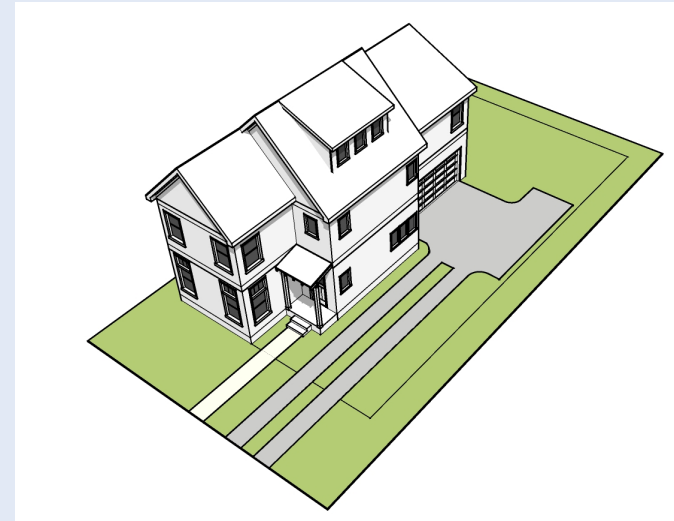
**FAR:**      **Parking:** 1 space per unit;  
No parking for ADU

**Height:** 25' to Top Plate  
35' for Overall Height Maximum

## R2: SINGLE FAMILY (5000 SF LOT)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		1940 sf
FAR	0.4 or 1300 sf/unit	0.39
Impervious Cover	40% max.	40%



- 1 Unit
- Constrained by impervious cover and FAR

## R2: SINGLE FAMILY + ADU (5000 SF LOT)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size	ADU 1100 sf	1300sf, 1100 sf
FAR	0.4 or 1300 sf/unit	0.48
Impervious Cover	45% max.	43%



- 1 Primary Unit + 1 ADU
- Constrained by max unit size



## R2: 2-UNIT (5000 SF LOT)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		1300 sf
FAR	0.4 or 1300 sf/unit	0.52 (1300 sf/unit)
Impervious Cover	45% max.	43%

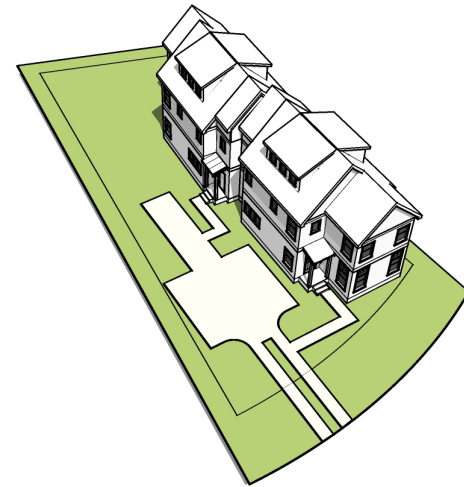


- 2 Units
- Constrained by max unit size

## R2: 2-UNIT (8500 SF LOT)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	8500 sf (median)
Unit Size		1700 sf
FAR	0.4 or 1300 sf/unit	0.4
Impervious Cover	45% max.	34%



- 2 Units
- Constrained by FAR

## R2: PRESERVATION (8500 SF LOT)

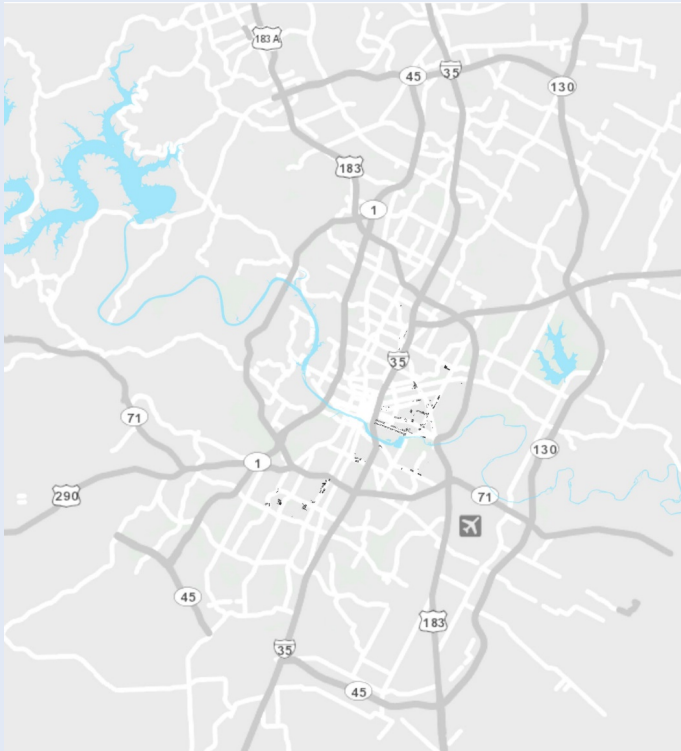


	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	8500 sf (median)
Unit Size (for new)		1700 sf
FAR	0.4 or 1300 sf/unit	0.4
Impervious Cover	50% max.	34%



- 1 Preserved Unit (1464sf) + 2 Units
- Constrained by FAR

# R3



**0.19% of City**

Median parcel size: **7247 sf**

## BASE SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

No. of Units	Impervious Cover	FAR
1 unit	40%	0.4
2 units	45%	0.4
3 units	50%	0.6

**Parking:** 1 space per unit;  
No parking for ADU

**Height:** 25' to Top Plate  
35' for Overall Height Maximum

## R3: 3-UNIT (5000 SF LOT)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		836 sf
FAR	0.6 max.	0.5
Impervious Cover	50% max.	50%



- 3 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover

## R3: 3-UNIT (7000 SF LOT)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	7000 sf (median)
Unit Size		1026 sf
FAR	0.6 max	0.44
Impervious Cover	50% max	50%

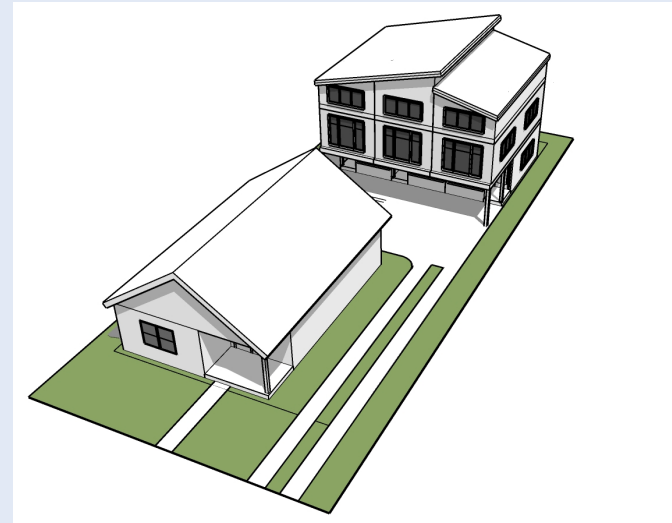


- 3 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover

## R3: PRESERVATION (7000 SF LOT)

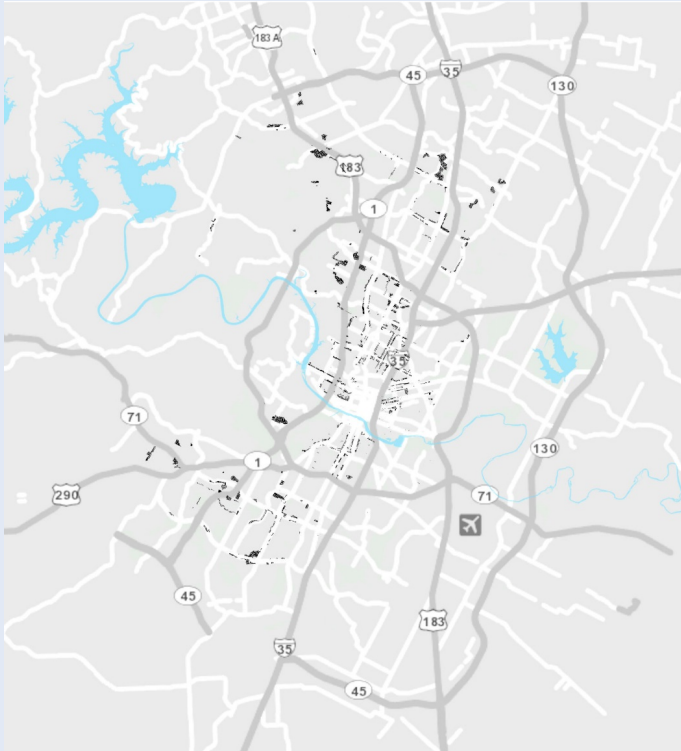


	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	7000 sf (median)
Unit Size		1026 sf
FAR	0.6	0.44
Impervious Cover	50%	50%



- 1 Preserved Unit (1306 sf) + 3 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover

# R4



**1.47% of City**

Median size of parcel size: **7949 sf**

## BASE SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

No. of Units	Impervious Cover	FAR
2 units	45%	0.4
3 units	50%	0.6
4 units	55%	0.6
5+ units	55%	0.6 (+0.2)

**Parking:** 1 space per unit;  
No parking for ADU

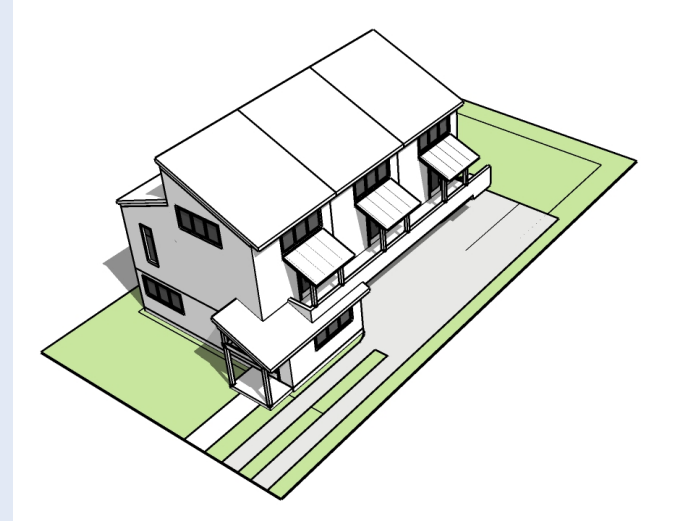
**Height:** 25' to Top Plate (+10 for Bonus)  
35' for Overall Height Maximum (+ 10 for Bonus)



## R4 BASE: 4 UNITS (5000 SF)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		587 sf/unit
FAR	0.6	0.47
Impervious Cover	55%	55%

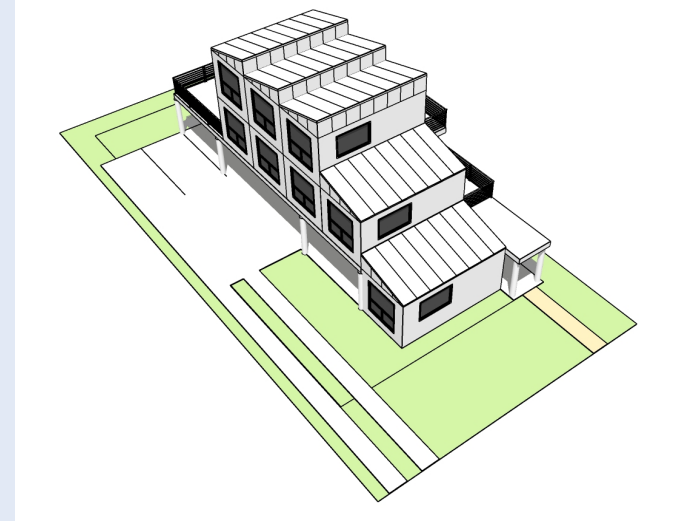


- 4 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover

## R4 BONUS: 8 UNITS (5000 SF)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		200 sf
FAR	0.6	0.32
Impervious Cover	55%	55%



- 8 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover

## R4 BASE: 4 UNITS (8000 SF)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	8000 sf (median)
Unit Size		1040 sf
FAR	0.6	.52
Impervious Cover	55%	55%



- 4 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover

## R4 BONUS: 8 UNITS (8000 SF)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	8000 sf (median)
Unit Size		800 sf
FAR	0.8	0.8
Impervious Cover	55%	55%



- 8 Units
- Constrained by FAR and impervious cover

# RM 1

**0.89% of City**

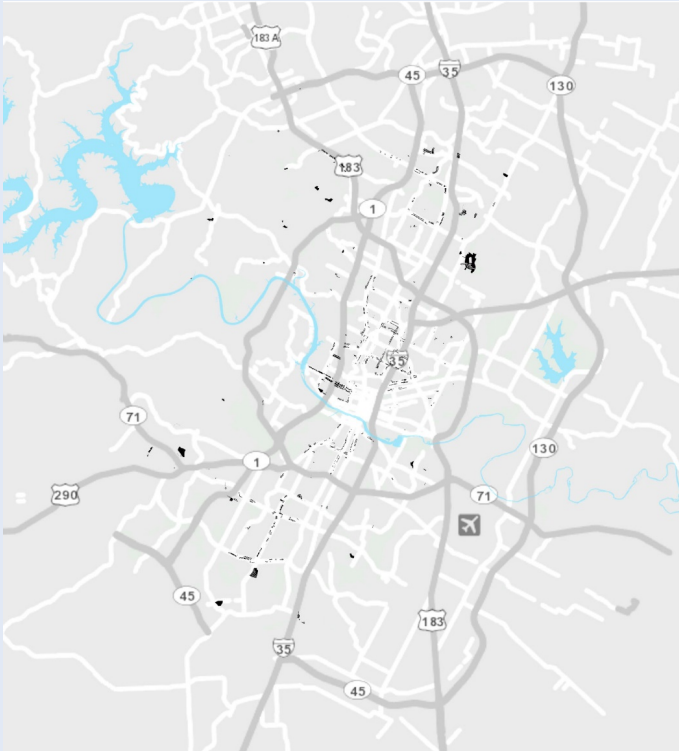
Median size of parcel size: **7458 sf**

## BASE SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

No. of Units	Impervious Cover	FAR
2 units	45%	0.4
3 units	50%	0.6
4 units	55%	0.6
5 units	55%	0.8
6 units	60%	0.8
7+ units	60%	0.8 (+1.0)

**Parking:** 1 space per unit;  
No parking for ADU

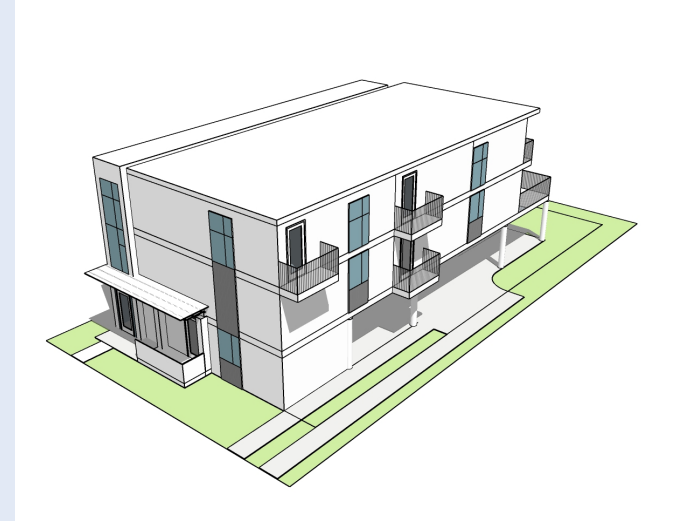
**Height:** 40' for Overall Height Maximum (+ 5 for Bonus)



## RM1 BASE: 6 UNITS (5000 SF)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		650 sf
FAR	0.8	0.78
Impervious Cover	60%	59%

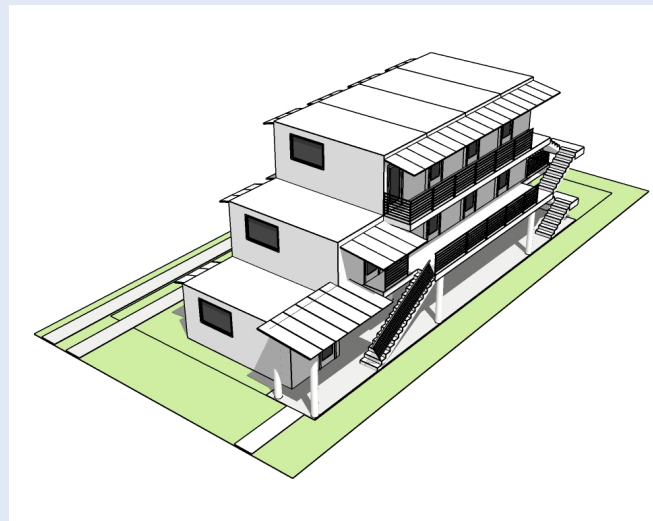


- 6 Units
- Constrained by impervious cover and FAR

## RM1 BONUS: 10 UNITS (5000 SF)



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	5000 sf
Unit Size		200 sf
FAR	0.8	0.4
Impervious Cover	60%	60%



- 10 units
- Constrained by impervious cover.



# RM1 BASE: 6 UNITS (7500 SF )



	Zone Standard	As Illustrated
Lot Size	5000 sf min.	7500 sf (median)
Unit Size		1000 sf
FAR	0.8	0.8
Impervious Cover	60%	60%



- 6 units
- Constrained by impervious cover and FAR



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MULTI-UNIT  
&  
MIXED-USE

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# RM3: BASE - RESIDENTIAL



Site: ~ 5 acres

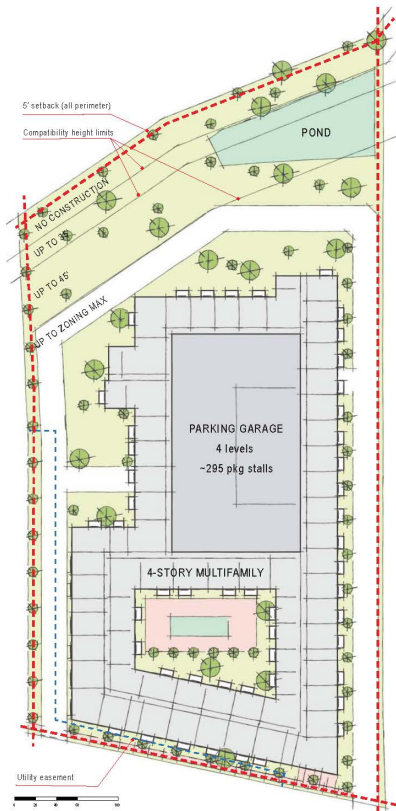
SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	185 max	126
DENSITY	36u/ac max	24.5 u/ac
FAR	0.8 max	0.65
HEIGHT	60' max	~45'
IMP. COVER	70% max	~53%
PKG RATIO	1.75 max	~1.0



**ATKINS**  
Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

# MU5: BASE - RESIDENTIAL



Site: ~ 5 acres

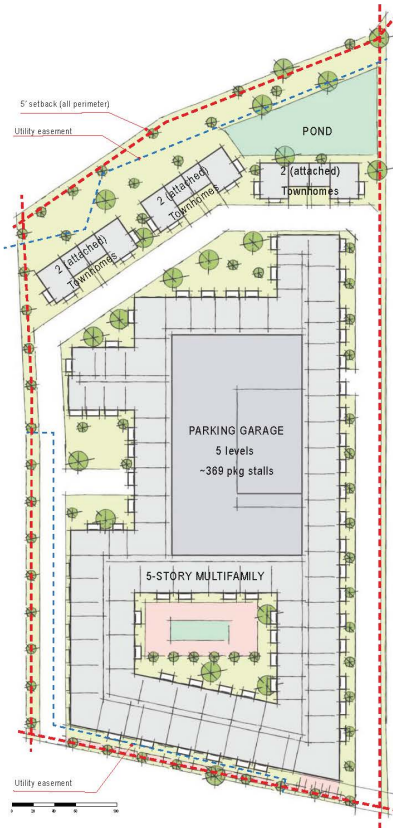
SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	246 max	246
DENSITY	48u/ac max	48 u/ac
FAR	2.0 max	1.13
HEIGHT	60' max	~47'
IMP. COVER	90% max	~67%
PKG RATIO	1.25 max	~1.2



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# MU5: BONUS - RESIDENTIAL



Site: ~ 5 acres

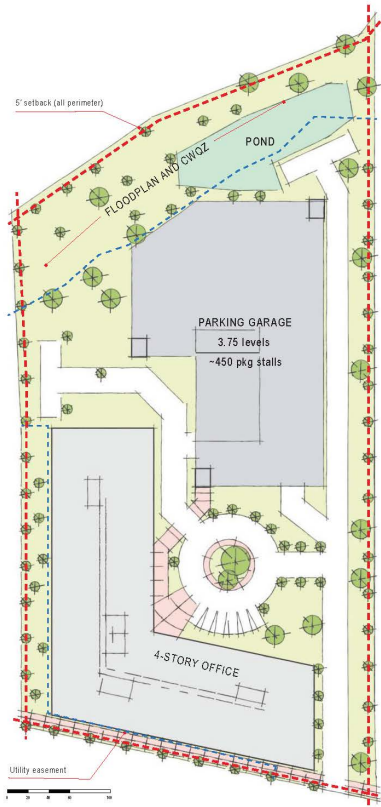
SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	unlimited	330 + 6TH
DENSITY	unlimited	64.1 u/ac
FAR	3.0 max	1.56
HEIGHT	90' max	~58'
IMP. COVER	90% max	~69%
PKG RATIO	1.25 max	~1.12



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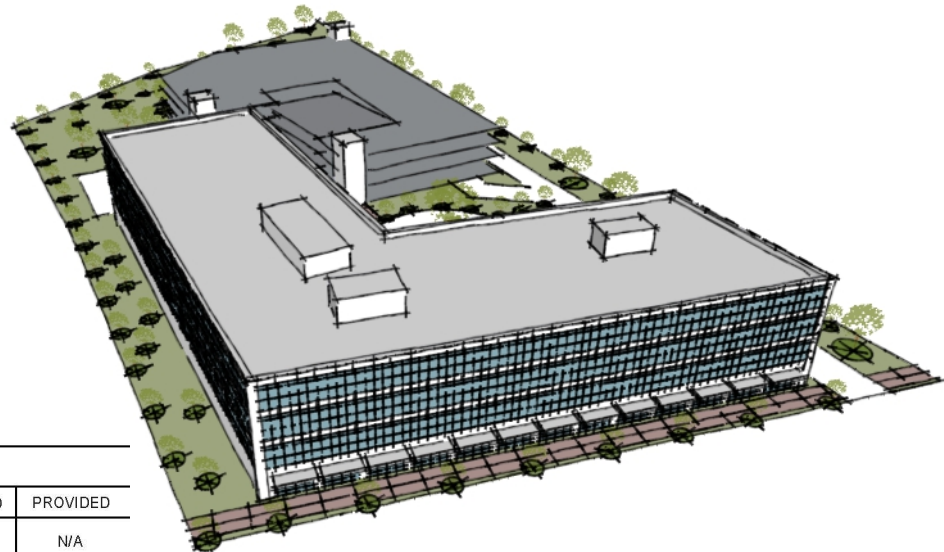
# MS3: BASE - OFFICE



Site: ~ 5 acres

SUMMARY TABLE

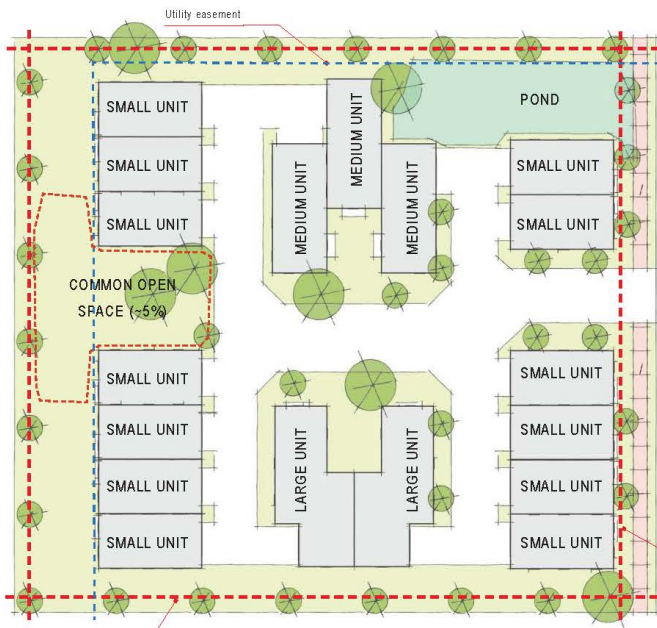
	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	N/A	N/A
OFFICE AREA	671,695sf	180,04sf
FAR	3.0 max	1.58
HEIGHT	65' max	~65'
IMP. COVER	90% max	~82%
PKG RATIO	1.25 max	~1.25



**ATKINS**  
Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group



# RM2: BASE - RESIDENTIAL



Site: ~ 1 acre

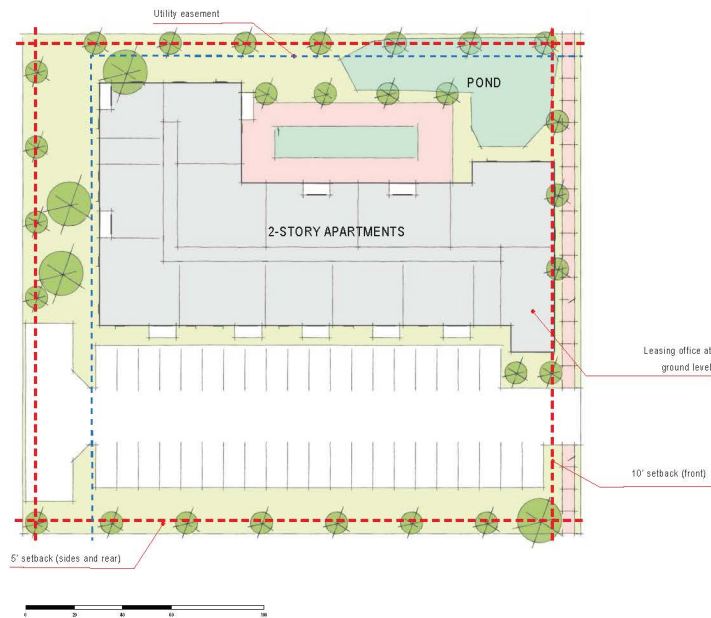
SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	27max	18
DENSITY	24 u/ac	15.8 u/ac
FAR	0.8 max	0.79
HEIGHT	40' max	~40'
IMP. COVER	60% max	~59%
PKG RATIO	1.75 max	~1.72



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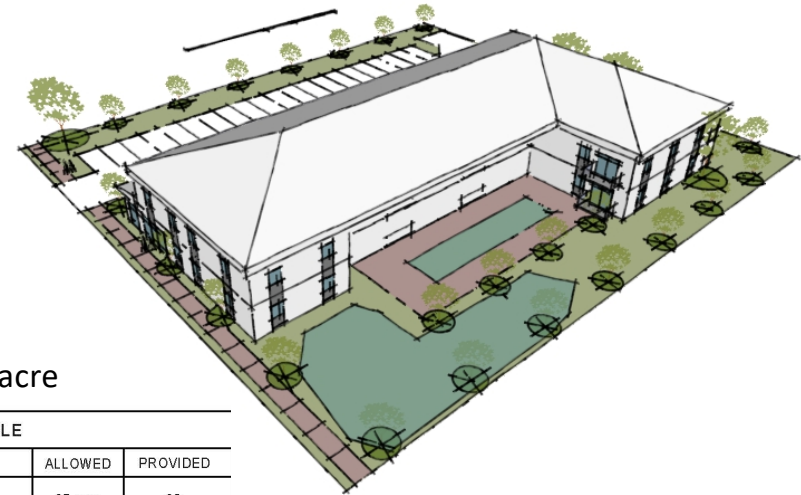
# MU3: BASE - RESIDENTIAL



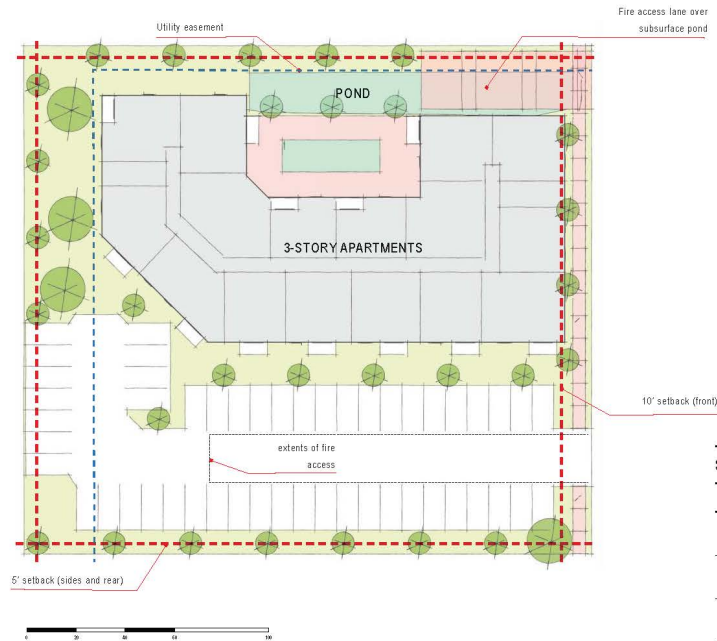
Site: ~ 1 acre

SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	27 max	25
DENSITY	24 u/ac max	22 u/ac
FAR	0.8 max	0.8
HEIGHT	40' max	~35'
IMP. COVER	70% max	~66%
PKG RATIO	1.75 max	~1.6



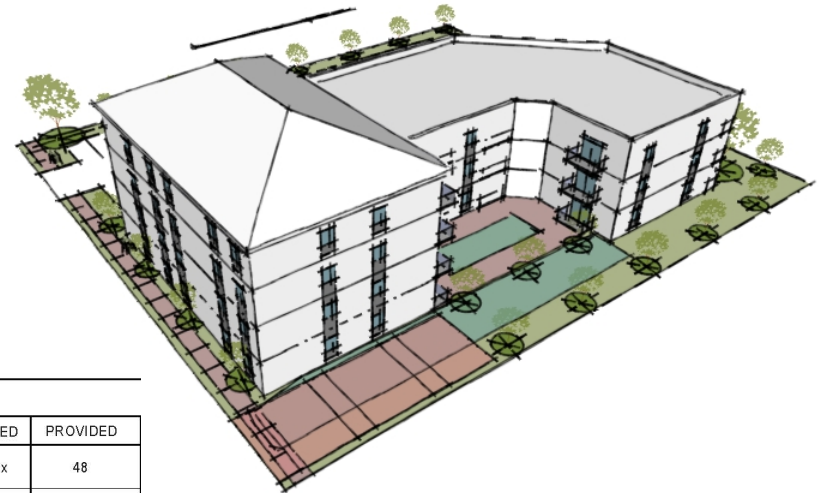
# MU3: BONUS - RESIDENTIAL



Site: ~ 1 acre

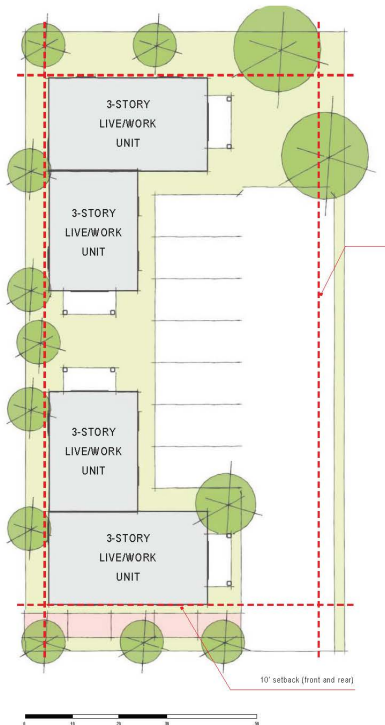
SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	68 max	48
DENSITY	60 u/ac max	42.4 u/ac
FAR	unlimited	1.0
HEIGHT	65' max	~45'
IMP. COVER	70% max	~70%
PKG RATIO	1.75 max	~1.12





# MU2: BASE – LIVE/WORK



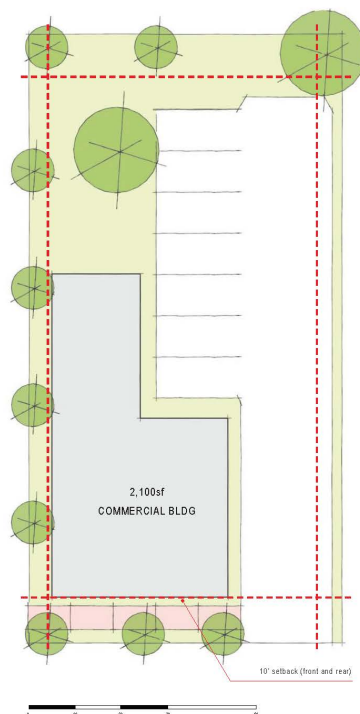
Site: ~ ¼ acre

SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	4.8 max	4
DENSITY	24u/ac max	20u/ac
FAR	0.8 max	0.8
HEIGHT	40' max	~40'
IMP. COVER	70% max	~68%
PKG RATIO	1.75 max	~1.75



# MU2: BASE - COMMERCIAL



Site: ~ ¼ acre

SUMMARY TABLE

	ALLOWED	PROVIDED
# UNITS	N/A	N/A
COMMERCIAL AREA	6,970sf max	6,970sf
FAR	0.8 max	0.8
HEIGHT	40' max	~38'
IMP. COVER	70% max	~70%
PKG RATIO	1.75 max	~0.35



# COMPATIBILITY ADJACENT TO R4



# COMPATIBILITY ADJACENT TO R4



# COMPATIBILITY ADJACENT TO R4





# COMPATIBILITY ADJACENT TO R4



# COMPATIBILITY ADJACENT TO R4

